



MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: All Media

ATT: News Editors, Health Reporters

For immediate release

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ACTING HEALTH MEC CALLS ON EMPLOYEES TO MAKE USE OF MULTI-LATERAL PLATFORMS INSTEAD OF EMBARKING ON ILLEGAL STRIKE ACTION

The acting MEC for Health, Jacob Mamabolo, has called on employees in the Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) to make use of various multi-lateral platforms available to them to raise issues with the employer instead of embarking on unprotected strike action.

This call comes after the department reached a settlement with labour to reinstate 25 Sterkfontein Hospital employees that were summarily dismissed on the 19th of May 2020 after they were involved in an illegal strike.

The illegal strike carried out by the workers disrupted hospital services and ignored the lockdown rules which prohibited public gatherings. The service disruption affected various areas of the hospital, including the usual multi-disciplinary team's morning visits to patients, which could not be undertaken as employees were locked outside the facility.

The dismissed employees lodged an appeal with the office of the MEC on their own. They also referred the matter to the Bargaining Council for arbitration. Following fruitful negotiations between the Department and the employees' union it was agreed amongst other things that the workers be reinstated.

"The doors of engagement will always be opened. It is in our interest to listen to the concerns that employees want to raise with the employer. However, this must be done within the confines of labour relations provisions, especially considering that workers in health render what is called an essential service and their work has a direct impact on the well-being of patients," commented MEC Mamabolo, reiterating the usage of available platforms to lodge grievances with the employer.

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